

5-1962

Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 34, no. 1

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BULLETIN

of the

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Vol. 34

May, 1962

No. 1



SPRING MEETING OF THE RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1962

KINGSTON FREE LIBRARY
Kingston, Rhode Island

PROGRAM

- 9:00-9:45 A.M. Registration Library
- 10:00 A.M. Welcome from Kingston Free Library,
Dr. Daniel H. Thomas, Trustee
Business Meeting
- 10:45 A.M. Panel Discussion: "*Rhode Island Libraries and Their
Services: Local, State and Federal*"
Participants:
Mr. John G. Lorenz, Director, Library Services
Branch of the Federal Department of Health,
Education and Welfare
Mr. John A. Humphry, Director, Brown University
Study of Rhode Island Library Service
Mr. Kay K. Moore, Chairman, Government Relations
Committee, Rhode Island Library Association
- 12:30 P.M. Luncheon Church Hall
- 2 P.M. "*Napoleon Comes to Rhode Island*", Mrs. John Nicholas
Brown. The story of how Mrs. Brown's famous col-
lection of military books, prints, and documents led
her to write *Anatomy of Glory*.
- 3 P.M. "*The Pleasures and Pains of Intensive Reading*", Mr.
Bradford F. Swan, distinguished writer and critic,
Providence Journal.

DIRECTIONS FOR REACHING KINGSTON FREE LIBRARY

To reach Kingston from Providence, take route 2 to the traffic circle at Wickford, then continue south on route 1A to route 138; turn right on route 138 and travel about three and a half miles to Kingston and the library.

From points east, Newport, Middletown, etc., follow route 138 west to Kingston.

From points south and west, any route which intersects route 138 will take you to Kingston.

The morning meeting will be held in the Kingston Free Library and the luncheon and afternoon meeting will take place in the Kingston Congregational Church Hall across the street from the library. There is a parking lot by the church, as well as in front of the library.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A listing of important events for the Rhode Island Library Association covering the year 1961-62 would be impressive for it has been a most exciting and busy year. To many of you, this would be a repetition of the many duties which you have performed over the year; however, a highlighting of the most important events may surprise and delight even those who have been most involved.

Most impressive has been the gradual unfolding of future plans taking shape under the Brown University Survey of Rhode Island's library services. The good points and the weaknesses, the brief and shining suggestions of plans for future development have first dampened the spirits and then strengthened the dreams for Rhode Island's library future. Mr. John Humphry, Director of the Springfield (Mass.) City Library, who is conducting the survey has become an important member of library meeting programs and will be greatly missed when his part is completed. The final survey is now being compiled and will be published and ready for distribution soon.

Two important bills were passed by the 1962 session of the General Assembly. (S. 66), a bill which established a Legislative Commission on Libraries to study Rhode Island's Library Laws and recommend revisions to be made, will bring a long overdue consideration and modernization of existing legislation.

The second legislative action (H. 1176) was an administration bill which memorializes the United States Congress to extend the Federal Library Services Act in order to include libraries in urban areas.

Each newly added step has its place in library development. The organization of a Trustee Committee within the Association's structure has brought an increasing realization of the trustee's place in the development and direction of library affairs, both local and state. The success of the first state-wide program for trustees held in Providence in April testifies to the need for trustee emphasis.

National Library Week brought out untapped sources of strength and a spread of knowledge of the library's role in the life of the state. The chairmen of all committees, local and state, public, school, college and private, worked together to emphasize the increasing importance of the library in the education of the American public. Essay contests—with amazing prizes—offered by the *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, displays, radio and TV programs and a general expansion of information concerning services which any library has to offer—all have emphasized the library as a source of power in the community which it serves.

Rhode Island is fast becoming conscious of its libraries—their needs and their possibilities. A new and exciting future is opening, and it is meetings such as the annual one being held on May 15, at Kingston, that will keep us all informed of details and ready to accept our individual parts in this new phase of library expansion.

Indeed this has been a worthwhile year—let us make 1962-63 even more so!

DOROTHY R. BARRE, *President*
Rhode Island Library Association

KINGSTON FREE LIBRARY

The earliest record of a library in Kingston dates back to the year 1825 when a group of forty-nine residents "desirous of instituting a social library to be kept at Little Rest in South Kingstown do hereby form ourselves into a society for that purpose". Kingston was formerly called Little Rest. The organization meeting was held in the present building.

Shares were sold to subscribers to finance the project and the books were kept in different dwellings where the housewife acted in the capacity of librarian. Later, the books were housed in the church and still later, were moved to a small building which stood at the entrance to College Road and which was adapted for a library and reading room.

The library was incorporated in 1891. In 1894 when a new court house was built in West Kingston, the Library Association petitioned the state legislature for use of the old court house. The request was granted and the funds were raised to equip the interior for library use. Since that time the library has occupied this building. Recently, the Library Association acquired title to the land and building, and it is now the sole owner. There are no longer shareholders, it being a free library.

From very small and modest beginnings the Kingston Free Library has grown to what it is today, a vital part of the community, serving townspeople, schools, and students from the University of Rhode Island.

Aid from town, state, and the Library Services Act has enabled the library to add significantly to the book collection. Users of the library continue to benefit from the efforts of the original founders and the generosity of Kingston residents both past and present.

We, of the Kingston Library, are proud and pleased to act as host to the spring meeting of the Rhode Island Library Association and extend a warm welcome to all.

LUCILE E. CHAMPLIN,
Librarian

COMMUNICATION FROM THE GOVERNOR

DEAR MRS. BOURN:

. . .

On March 13, 1962 I was privileged to be able to approve as Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, H-1176, an administration bill memorializing the Congress of the United States with a request to provide for urban libraries the type of financial aid which has heretofore been made available to rural libraries.

I hope that the Congress will act favorably and promptly on this matter, since the aid sought will add immeasurably to the cultural enrichment of our urban communities.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN A. NOTTE, JR.
Governor

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NARRAGANSETT BAY PENMAN

(The Penman Column this Spring is written by the Reverend Georges Bissonnette. At the Yalta Conference, a concession which President Roosevelt won was that the Soviet Union would accept the presence of a Roman Catholic priest to serve members of the Embassy staff. By tradition, this priest has always been a member of the Assumptionist Order. Father Bissonnette was this priest for a few years until the Soviet declared him *persona non grata*, though they had trouble thinking up any charges to bring against him. One of the things which seemed to irritate them most was his clerical, an in-offensive black fedora.

Father Bissonnette rates the *Narragansett Penman* column because he was born in Central Falls Rhode Island. He is now an Assumptionist Father, attached to Assumption College, Worcester, Mass., as Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the School of Foreign Affairs.

Author: *Moscow Was My Parish* (New York, 1956); *Moscou ma paroisse* (Paris, 1958, 1961) two ed.: *Articles in Marian Studies, Slavic and East European Studies, Recent Soviet Trends, Essays in Russian and Soviet History*, etc.

Spring

By REV. GEORGES BISSONNETTE, A.A.

The other day while reading Maurice Hindus' latest *reportage*, "House Without a Roof", to break the monotony of correcting mid-term examination papers, I came to the place where he described the coming of spring to Irkutsk in Eastern Siberia. It sounded so much like the springs I had seen in Canada that I did not realize at once that he was speaking of late June. Spring in June. Why that was even later than the Canadian spring! During the war, we had thought it strange that the people of Canada should accept late May as spring without commenting on it. Here were people who did not look for frost-free days until the end of June. Maybe the seasons we had always thought of as the paradigm of nature's regularity were not "objective data" after all.

The day before, I had been in Prov-

idence and the grass had already begun to grow there. Outside my half-open window, barely forty miles away from Providence, there was not even a trace of green. In fact, a pheasant was just then gingerly stepping across a patch of snow, stopping now and then with head cocked to one side as if waiting for an answer to his turkey-like call. Enough of the snow had gone for the shining birches to stand out from the uniformly brown, second-growth forest.

It may have been the disappointing sameness of the answers which my undergraduates found to the questions I had so carefully prepared to give them room for imaginative replies which set me off on this line of thought, but once started I could not pull in the reins.

How provincial my thoughts had become. How strong the inclination to shut out and neglect whatever was not right before my eyes. The director of a school of foreign affairs, who has traveled up and down the Soviet Union, most of Europe, Korea and Japan, Canada and Hawaii, Alaska and the newly "continental" United States, who has seen places where there is no spring because it is always summer, others where the orange trees are in blossom in the middle of February, and still others where the tomatoes grow in hothouses until the last days of June . . . and my range of vision did not extend further than a little wooded knoll with a lonely pheasant picking his way across a little patch of snow in late March. How long had this myopia been developing? How could I expect to bring to life for my students the far-off lands and the exotic peoples who inhabited them? Yet, unless the students learned to understand those strange peoples they might not see many more springs, or they might see the last spring, the one which sprouted the big mushroom.

Just then one of the school's typists clicked by on her way to an automobile—her day's work done. No one would have to tell her that spring had come. Here it was four weeks before Easter and she was wearing a little white hat with two gay, long-stemmed daffodils. She was aware of the coming of spring. She was even trying to make us aware of it in her own way, by giving us a preview of spring's flowers. This girl was certainly immunized against myopia.

Maybe I ought to turn over the Foreign Affairs students to Jo and take her place at the IBM machine. Maybe she could do more for the students with her sensitivity to change and with her interest in the reaction of others than I could with all that geography, sociology, economics and history. Maybe women should be asked to handle international affairs. They certainly could not do much worse than we had been doing, and

who knows whether a little more sensitivity would not go further than our poor efforts at balancing power potentials?

Then the phone rang. The Registrar wished to know when the mid-term marks would be ready.

It was almost cheering to know that I was not the only victim of myopia who had not noticed that spring had come.

SELECTION OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR LIBRARIES

By VIRGINIA FOOKS, *Librarian*
Providence Public Library

More than 1,600 books for children were published last year, and there are as many published every year. The challenge to librarians is to recognize good books with lasting values and to make them available to boys and girls. The responsibility for meeting this challenge is shared by the librarians working with children in both large and small libraries. The selection is not easy for there is always the possibility that some good books will be overlooked. Among the good books are many trivial and mediocre ones which because of their attractive appearance are deceptive except to experienced book selectors. Some of the undesirable books are inexpensive, colorfully illustrated, have limited vocabulary and are issued in publishers' series. They are often written according to a formula and are shallow. Particular care should be taken to evaluate them.

Because of limitations in the size of the book collection and budget, the responsibility for making wise choices of books is greater for the book selector in small libraries than in large ones. Some pointers for the selection of children's books, the old established ones as well as the new, are listed below. If they are followed and funds are sufficient to supply an



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adequate number of books, the collection should provide joy and enrichment for boys and girls.

1. Consider book selection as one of the most important responsibilities of a librarian.
2. Determine the interests and needs of boys and girls and keep up-to-date with their changing interests.
3. Provide a broad, varied and balanced book collection to meet children's inspirational and informational needs.
4. Provide the enduring imaginative books in the original text, not in abridged versions.
5. Duplicate significant and basic books so that they are readily available.
6. Provide books of varying levels of difficulty for different ages and abilities.
7. Provide basic, recommended reference books, including a children's encyclopedia, almanac, atlas and dictionary. Keep the collection small, useful and up-to-date.
8. Provide, first, the best books to meet the individual child's personal needs; and, secondarily, those for his school needs. Do not serve in place of a school library.
9. Remain objective in book selection so as to meet actual community needs rather than popular pressures.
10. Replace books as they become shabby and dated to insure an inviting and useful book collection.
11. Use recommended book selection aids for the selection of books. *Do not select from publishers' catalogs.*

The following book reviewing publications and special lists are recommended for use in selecting children's books:

BOOK REVIEWING PUBLICATIONS

Children's Catalog. 10th ed. H. W. Wilson Co., 1961. Annual supplements.

Booklist with Subscription Books Bulletin: A Guide to Current Books. American Library Association. 23 issues per year.

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books. University of Chicago Graduate Library School. 11 issues per year.

Horn Book Magazine. Horn Book, Inc. 6 issues per year.

SPECIAL LISTS, such as

Arbuthnot, M. H. *Children's Books Too Good to Miss.* Western Reserve University, 1959.

Science Book List for Children. American Association for the Advancement of Science and The National Science Foundation, 1960.

Every Age Has Its Book. Providence Public Library, 1961.

EAST GREENWICH LIBRARY POPULAR WITH CHILDREN

By

MARTHA MCPARTLAND, *Librarian*

Assuming that the children of today are the townspeople of tomorrow, the future for relations between town, library and schools in East Greenwich looks bright indeed, for the use of the library by the children is definitely on the increase. In ten years the circulation of children's books has risen from 8,546 in 1951 to 26,254 in 1961. Even allowing for normal increase in the use of the library, this is unusual for us. The reason is in part the program of visiting the schools, thus arousing interest of the youngsters of elementary school age.

This program, inaugurated in 1951, involved ground work and consultations with school authorities. Here in Greenwich school-library relations are good. Mr. Archie Cole, Superinten-

dent of Schools, and teachers in both public and parochial schools have been most cooperative. Each fall, when the first few weeks of orientation are over, the librarian contacts teachers and principals in the lower grades at Eldredge, Frenchtown, Hanaford, Our Lady of Mercy and Cowesett schools; as to the date and time of day convenient for visiting. Then she descends with a basket of new bright-jacketed books. Fifteen to twenty minutes in each room with a quick, tantalizing display of a number of books and a short talk about the library is the usual schedule. One book is featured and read completely. We have found that a short, funny book, preferably in rhyme, is the favorite.

During the visit the librarian distributes application cards to those not already holding library cards. She also invites the youngsters to return her visit, either singly or in a class group.

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Although this program is a time-consuming (and often back-breaking!) job, it has become a traditional and a much anticipated custom.

THERE'S BEEN ALTOGETHER TOO MUCH TALK . . .

by

LOUIS VAGIANOS,
*Assistant to the Librarian
Brown University*

For many years now our professional literature has offered countless articles on the problem of recruitment. These articles have stressed over and over again the lack of talented and trained young people to fill available positions.

They have warned that these shortages increase yearly and that a crisis may soon develop since our "yield" from the annual crop of college graduates has not increased in proportion to our needs.

They have reminded us that we have failed in our efforts to lure worthy candidates into our ranks because we have not met the competition of business, industry and the other professions effectively—if at all!

They have reported that the major obstacle in our effort to recruit has been the distorted and unfavorable image of librarians and their profession in the minds of other professionals and the public. This image is continually losing us many potentially able recruits. It is responsible for causing these potential recruits to see librarianship as an occupation rather than a profession, requiring no more than high level clerical skills, and the Graduate Library School as an institution with a narrow intellectual base and an almost non-existent basic research program, maintaining a curriculum seriously overcrowded with "nut

and bolts" type courses at the expense of academic course content.

This, in turn, has stimulated the belief that librarians are guardians or custodians of books—quaint, dull, gray, conformist individuals who quiet noisy library users, charge books, and file cards. A group of "handmaidens" to the every wish of a sometimes uninformed public, they command poor salaries with little hope or incentive for advancement within the profession.

The writers of these articles have advised, in some cases even assured us, that all is not lost. There is hope. The solution to our problem lies primarily in a greatly expanded public relations program, utilizing the latest and finest Madison Avenue techniques. This program would propagandize a new, vital, comprehensive and favorable professional image—cost notwithstanding!

There is, of course, some validity to this argument. An imaginative public relations campaign could prove valuable. It might even provide some temporary relief. But it would be unreasonable to believe that any amount of public relations can alter an image much—unless the causative forces responsible for it are changed.

There can be little doubt that many of our professionals are doing too much routine clerical work. Hopefully, this is being recognized by administrators and remedied. We must use our personnel wisely—if only to cope better with our present day shortages.

There can be even less doubt about the quality of Graduate Library education. It is clear that it has made little impact in academic circles. The Deans know this; they know that curricula need overhauling so that course content can be strengthened and basic research extended. Our professional support and suggestions are needed

to stimulate and encourage implementation of these new and improved programs.

It is equally true, though very unfortunate, that a great many among us view our work as an occupation rather than a profession—the supervision of a procedure rather than the administration of a public trust. We see ourselves as neutral, passive, negative guardians or fiduciaries of a vast warehouse and our principal duty as helping the reader (i.e. learning his wishes, not necessarily his needs, and satisfying them).

We do not recognize what seems to me to be the central meaning of our profession—educating the public. Our commitment should demand that we think and act, not as clerks serving customers in a department store, but as partisans and advocates willing to step on a few toes, irritate a few users, and run a few risks in order to fulfill this obligation to society.

The Library is not a warehouse or storage depot housing books. It is a social apparatus—created by society to fulfill an indispensable need and function. It, through the medium of the librarian, transfers books to living individuals; and these books represent the major social mechanism for preserving the racial memory.

It is time our users recognized this. It is time they realized that it is the unique professional skill of a good librarian which makes this enormously complex source—this gigantic ref-

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erence tool—an even more valuable and accessible information center. This may not be easy. It will require radical changes for many of us in our daily working habits and attitudes; yet it must be done. The world, for better or for worse, usually takes us at our own valuation!

There has been altogether too much talk about this recruitment problem and not enough corrective action. We have spent *too* much time worrying and complaining about our unfavorable professional image and the, generally speaking, barely adequate salary scale of the profession.

In the case of the former we must concentrate on changing the image by changing ourselves. The problem here is not primarily a public relations one but a professional one that can be combatted most effectively on an individual level.

In the case of the latter it can only be said that salary scales are improving and the future looks bright. The increasing flow of printed matter and the greater dependence of our technological society on the accumulation and availability of this knowledge will augment our bargaining power.

In any case now is the time for action. We must all begin to think and act as professionals. We must start from within for quality and only quality will, in the long haul, attract quality to our ranks!

NEW MANUAL IN PREPARATION

A manual on cataloging and classification for small libraries is being prepared by Esther J. Piercy for publication by The H. W. Wilson Company. This work is addressed particularly to school libraries and small public libraries and is scheduled for publication early in 1963.

In recent years the Company has received many requests from librarians for guidance in the processing of

materials. Miss Piercy's manual is designed to meet this need. Drawing upon recent developments in cataloging practice and theory, it will give practical advice on organizing and classifying materials in small libraries.

Miss Piercy brings to this assignment a wide background of professional experience, including administrative and processing work in school and public libraries of varying sizes. At present she is Chief of the Processing Division of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. From 1950-1956 she was editor of the *Journal of Cataloging and Classification* and, since 1957, editor of the publication which succeeded it, *Library Resources & Technical Services*. In 1960 she conducted a survey of librarians' reactions to the Library of Congress's experimental project in cataloging-in-source, and wrote the official report of the survey. She has frequently contributed to professional periodicals.

ANY DAY

by

DORIS CHAPDELAINE, *Librarian*

When the Harris Institute Library opens its doors at 9 a.m., the rush is on for the daily newspapers by retired gentlemen interested in the news and in the doings of their financial holdings.

The telephone rings. A teacher would like sixty books for her Seventh grade, an assortment on the 6th, 7th and 8th grade levels, and may she pick these up this afternoon? This is referred to the children's room.—“Would you check for me, Dr. X in the latest Who's Who in America?—Dr. X is not listed—Then would you check Poor's?”

Back at the charging desk “I want a book on ‘anna-tomic,’ ” I want to learn how to perform autopsies. May I have our weekly news magazines America, Christian Century, Commonweal,

Nation, New Republic, Time, U. S. News Report and the New York Times Magazine and Book Review sections, and do you have a file of the Sunday Star published a few years ago? — Yes, we do. — May I see the last issue that was published?"

"Where do I get a birth certificate? Is this the City Clerk's Office?" (The Library occupies part of the second floor of City Hall.)

"I'm looking for pictures of young people, pictures that tell a story." After making his selection, "These I will have photographed and use the enlargements on the walls of a recreation room for vacation week."

Back to the telephone. "Do you have a book that tells what you would do if you had \$1,000,000?—Is there a fairy tale connected with Raggedy Ann?—Do you have telephone books; I'm planning on serving papers on a Hartford resident, and I'm looking for the name of a sheriff.—Do you have books on boat building with illustrations, I need pictures for a project.—We are sorry but pictures cannot be cut out from library books or magazines," we inform the young man.

The students flock in, the room is a beehive of activity, standing room only—"I'm looking for a book on antidotes of a famous person.—I caught a little snake and have it in a box under my bed. In which book will I find what to feed it to keep it alive?—May I have the book I had yesterday—What's the title?—I don't remember, but it's a fat book with a red cover and it's a reference book—A book on what?—Oh! all about science and chemistry. *The Handbook of Chemistry* is what the student is after—"I'd like a book on the social life of the bee."

The microfilm of the *Woonsocket Call* is set on the reader for a student doing a paper on the depression years.

The lights flicker; it's almost closing

time, a patron dashes to the desk. At what time do you open tomorrow?" And so with the promise of a patron awaiting the unlocking of the doors, the curtain falls on another day at the Harris Institute Library.

NEWS FROM THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

BY MRS. DAVID CHERNACK, *President*

Dr. Lorraine Tolman, Librarian of the School of Education and Professor of Library Science at Boston University, addressed the Rhode Island School Library Association at its annual fall meeting in October, 1961. Her topic was the school library of the near future.

The Association, in an attempt toward meeting A. L. A. standards for school libraries, has cooperated as part of the State Department's Advisory Committee to School Libraries

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which is considering the standards problem.

The school librarians of Rhode Island have also participated in the observation of National Library Week by encouraging the students to participate in the writing contest sponsored by the Providence Journal-Bulletin in conjunction with the National Library Week Committee; by presenting displays in the schools; by involving both students and teachers in many varied book activities.

The School Library Association has requested the State Department of Education to revamp their certification requirements for school librarians so that they will be more in line with the certification policies of the other states.

The display **BOOKS ON EXHIBIT**, a collection of about 750 books covering all grades from the kindergarten through high school, will be sponsored by the Rhode Island School Library Association and presented at

Rhode Island College on Thursday and Friday, October 25th and 26th. All interested persons are invited to attend. The books displayed will be the best of the publishers' spring and summer publications.

HOME DELIVERY OF BOOKS

A \$10,000 grant toward support of an experiment in the home delivery of books, to be conducted by the Citizens Library of Greater Washington, Pennsylvania, was announced in March by the Council on Library Resources, Inc.

The experiment is under the general direction of Norman W. Lyon, Librarian and a former member of the Pennsylvania State University faculty in psychology, with Mrs. Edith M. Bouson serving as project director.

The Citizens Library, founded in 1870, serves a population of 46,000 in an area of 60 square miles. Although

(Continued on Page 14)

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Island a complete set of the World Book Encyclopedia in Braille will be presented to a worthy educational institution in the state. This monumental and intricate printing will require nearly a year before the final shipment will be made. For further information call Mr. Robert L. Smith, the World Book Encyclopedia manager for Rhode Island, at GA 1-3170.

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VOLUMES
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HOME DELIVERY OF BOOKS

(Continued from Page 12)

the use of the Library has more than tripled in the last three years, forcing it to seek enlarged quarters. Mr. Lyon is convinced that obstacles to the use of the library, especially in the form of transportation distances and lack of parking facilities, greatly limit the fulfillment of its potential usefulness to the community. The one-year home-delivery project, which got underway on February 28, will combat these obstacles.

The experiment provides for advertisements in the local press twice a month, reporting the Library's new acquisitions or listing its holdings on various subjects. Costs of the advertisements, which offer both informational and recreational reading, are being met by the Friends of the Library.

By calling the Library a borrower

may arrange either for the home delivery of specific books or may place a standing order for books on particular subjects to be sent at fortnightly intervals. Delivery is effected through a local firm, which delivers and returns the borrowed material for a minimal fee paid by the borrower.

The grant from the Council will defray costs of project administration and of part of the additional copies of books which will be required. A report at the conclusion of the project will evaluate its effectiveness in fulfilling the objective of improving library service to the community.

Though many public and private libraries have at one time or another had home-delivery service, and such service is currently offered in many cities to blind and shut-in readers, this is believed to be the first controlled experiment of this nature.

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION — 1961-1962

PRESIDENT:	MRS. DOROTHY BARRE 38 Elm Street, Westerly—LY 6-2722 Westerly Public Library—LY 6-4701
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